

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ACCUSES CERTAIN NEWSPAPERS OF
STIRRING UP ANTI-AMERICANISM

REF: A. ATHENS 127 B. ATHENS 79

1. A GREEK GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT WAS ISSUED LATE JAN 7 IN CONNECTION WITH THE HANDLING RICHARD WELCH'S MURDER BY THE GREEK PRESS. THE TEXT OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT READS AS FOLLOWS: "SINCE CERTAIN NEWSPAPERS, IN ADDITION TO DISOBEYING THE LAW AND THE RELEVANT PROHIBITION BY THE STATE PROSECUTOR CONCERNING THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE MURDER OF RICHARD WELCH, ATTEMPT TO CULTIVATE IN PUBLIC OPINION AN ANTI-AMERICAN SPIRIT, A GOVERNMENTAL SOURCE MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: THIS ATTEMPT OF A PORTION OF THE PRESS, SOMETIMES REINFORCED BY POLITICAL FIGURES, IS NOT ONLY COMPLETELY UNJUSTIFIED AND NATIONALLY HARMFUL BUT ALSO DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE TRUE FEELINGS OF THE GREEK PEOPLE". END TEXT.

2. ALL MORNING AND AFTERNOON NEWSPAPERS CARRIED THE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT JAN 8, IN SOME CASES COMBINING IN THE SAME STORY THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBASSY TWO DAYS AGO WHICH REBUTTED CATEGORICALLY THE

PERSONAL ATTACK ON THE AMBASSADOR PRINTED IN ELEFHEROTYPIA (REF B). THE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT-FOLLOWING ON THE HEELS OF THE EARLIER EMBASSY STATEMENT--PROVOKED REACTIONS FROM ALL THE OPPOSITION PARTIES. PASOK ASSERTED THE "THE INTERVENTION OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY TO MUZZLE THE GREEK PRESS IS UNACCEPTABLE" AND CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT "THE AMERICANS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THIS COUNTRY BELONGS TO THE GREEKS--THAT THIS LAND IS OURS, AND NOT THEIRS."

3. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR STRUCK A SIMILAR NOTE AND ADDED IN ADDITION THE ASSERTION THAT WHAT THE GOG CHARACTERIZES AS "ANTI-AMERICAN SPIRIT, REFLECTS THE STRUGGLE OF THE GREEK PEOPLE AGAINST AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND ITS SECRET SERVICES IN GREECE." THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR SUGGESTED THAT THE GOG SHOULD HAVE CONDEMNED "THE UNACCEPTABLE INTERFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY RATHER THAN PROTESTING THE ANTI-AMERICAN SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE." THE CENTER UNION/NEW FORCES (CU/NF) STATEMENT-ISSUED IN THE ABSENCE OF PARTY LEADER MAVROS WHO WAS IN EGYPT--ASSERTED THAT THE GOVT "ONCE AGAIN REVEALS ITS COMPLETE SEPARATION FROM THE FEELING OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE GREEK PEOPLE."

4. THE NEWLY SWORN IN MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER--GEORGE STAMATIS--ISSUED A STATEMENT JAN 7 IN WHICH HE STRESSED THAT THE INVESTIGATION AIMED AT DISCOVERING AND ARRESTING THE MURDERS OF WELCH IS BEING CONTINUED IN A SYSTEMATIC FASHION. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT THE REWARD PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED IS STILL IN FORCE AS ARE THE GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES THAT THE ANONYMITY OF ANY INFORMER WILL BE FULLY PROTECTED. KUBISCH

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